

Courage: *As for courage and will—we cannot measure how much of each lies within us, we can only trust there will be sufficient to carry through trials which may lie ahead.—Andre Alice Norton, American writer, 1912 -*

HED Commander's Comment

Thank you for your service



*By Lt. Col.
Wally Z. Walters
HED Commander*

As this time of year brings the 225th Anniversary of the Army, Independence Day and the end of my command of the Honolulu Engineer District my thoughts turn toward the gratitude I share for those who have made our country great. My thanks especially extend to those who have contributed to the District's work and with whom it has been my privilege to serve.

It is easy to see the evidence of the District's work in the buildings, roads, harbors and environmentally protected areas of our military and civilian communities. However, aside from temporary signs during construction and a few civil works plaques, there is little direct recognition of the District or its people. Further, at ribbon cutting ceremonies I also find a tendency toward celebration of users and occupants, not the designers, managers, builders and the many others whose skills are needed to complete any project. Few newspapers celebrate their numerous achievements.

I believe this lack of recognition springs more from lack of understanding than from lack of appreciation. For many decades, the habit of the Corps has been to do the work out of view of those we support and to focus celebration on the recipient. It is also an American political habit to claim that federal civilian workers are clock-watching bureaucrats. Nothing could be further from the truth.

My experience as a District Engineer has given me new insight and appreciation for the Corps of Engineers' great civilian workforce that is a vital part of the Army in serving the Nation. The dedication to high

standards of performance and service that I have observed in the District staff is unequalled by those of any other organization in which I have been a part. I have been greatly impressed by the extraordinary lengths individuals go to solve problems, often at great sacrifice to their time and without compensation.

I have also been impressed by the difficulties that must be overcome to accomplish any significant project.

That much is accomplished is not because the work is easy. I extend my personal and professional thanks to everyone in the District for their service and dedication.

Many others also contribute to the work of the District as well, as they serve as part of other government organizations, as suppliers and contractors, or take action as motivated citizens. As technologies and processes become more team focused and cut across boundaries, the support of those beyond the formal organization will become ever more important. We should welcome and appreciate our relationships with those outside the District and take advantage of their participation in our work not only to achieve more, but also to better familiarize them with our work's many challenges.

I will take many memories with me from my tour in the District of the staff's accomplishments — completing many great projects, overcoming financial crises, conducting reorganization, initiating new processes, achieving success in every mission area, bringing District performance to a much higher level — but none will be as powerful or as lasting as those of the dedication, talent, and warm ohana of the people with whom it has been my privilege to spend the past two years. Mahalo nui loa.

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—Lt.Col. Wally Z. Walters

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